MMMM_The Bible-WK01-As Shared, As Sacred, and as A Text.Media.archive

Session 1 - September 7, 2025

Series: The Bible - Mining Many Messy Meanings
Lecture Title: "As Shared; As Sacred; As 'a' Text"
Speaker: Henry Imler

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1 Bibliography

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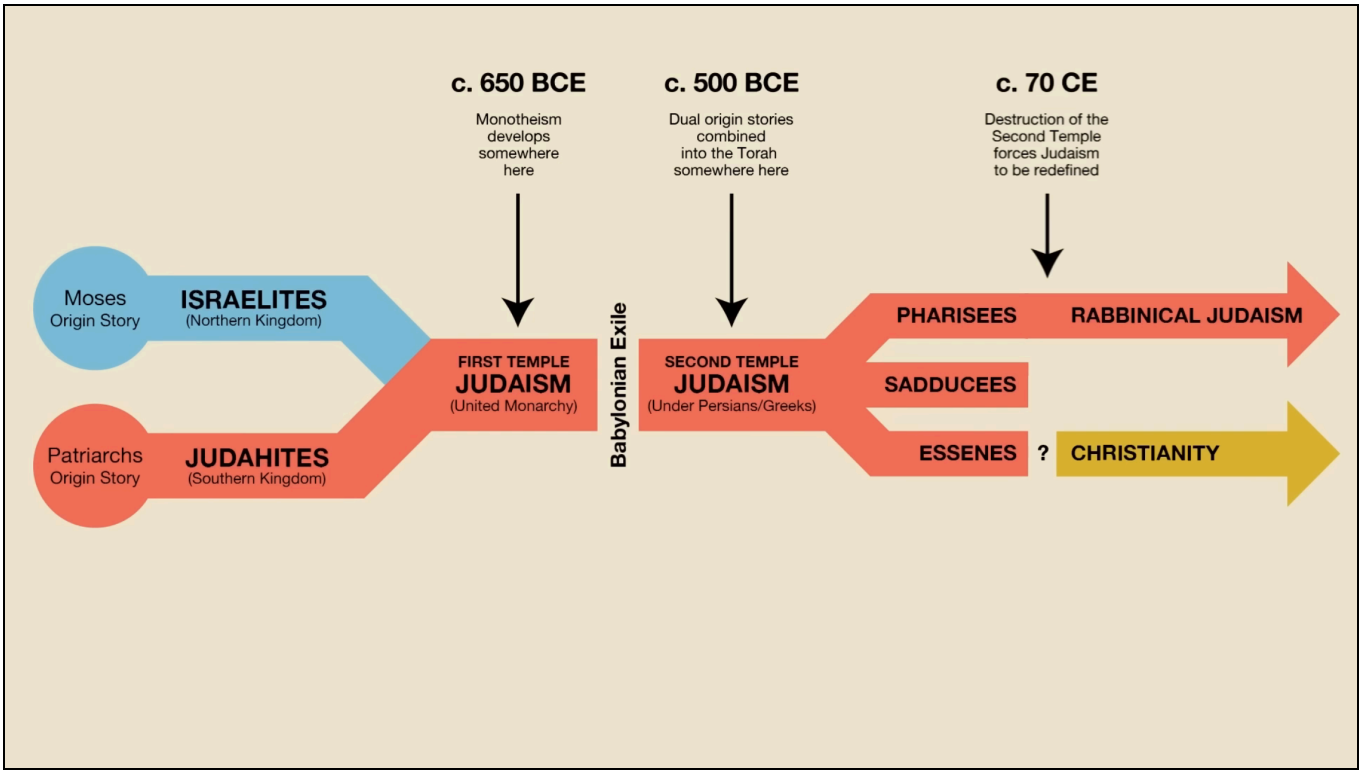
- Adair, Peter, dir. *Holy Ghost People*. Documentary. With Brenda Lanham and Michael Lanham. Thistle Films, 1967. 53m.
- Baker, Matthew. “Introduction to the Bible from an Academic Point of View.” November 4, 2022. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KqSkXmFun14.
- “The Rise of a Christian Bible.” In *Early Biblical Interpretation*, 1st ed, by James L. Kugel and Rowan A. Greer. Library of Early Christianity. Westminster Press, 1986.

2 As Shared

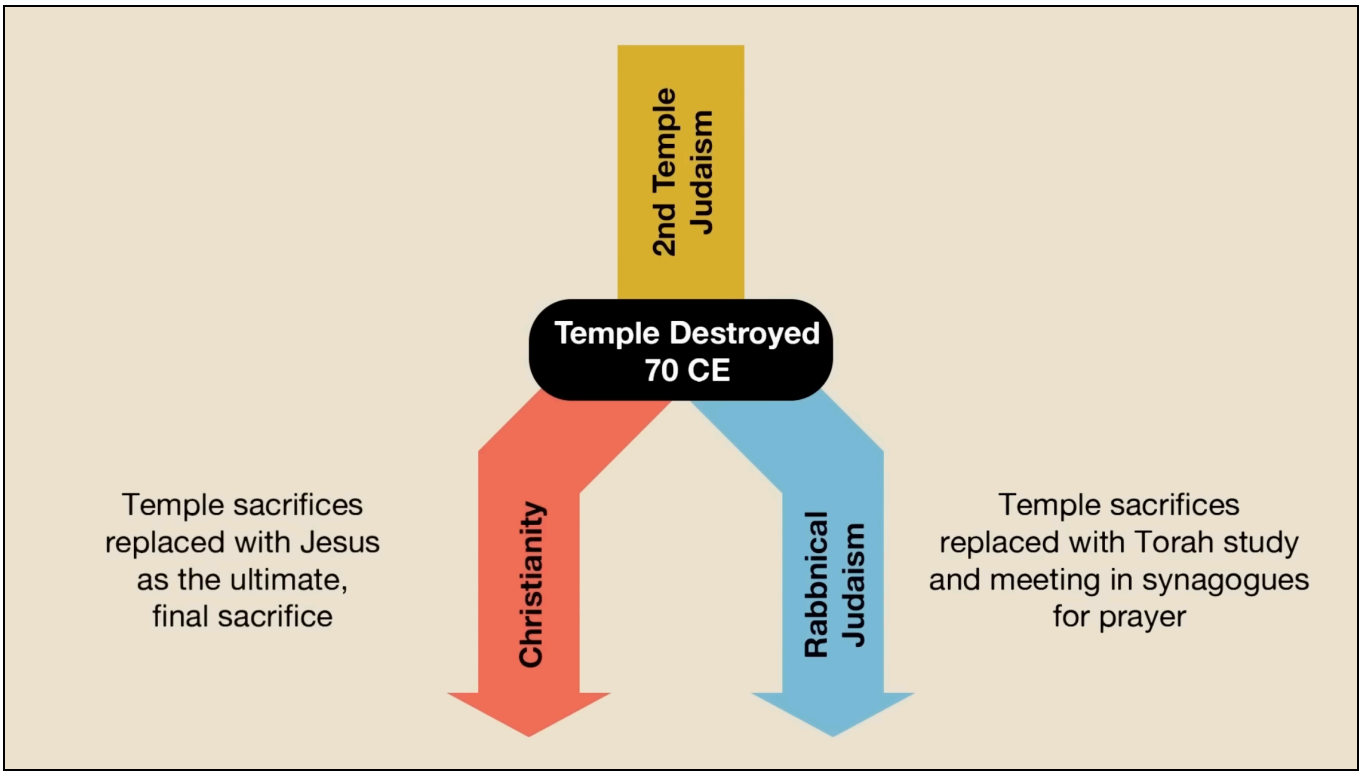
2.1 Major Events in Judaism



- **Caption**: Major events in Jewish religious development showing the evolution from
  - separate northern (Moses tradition) and southern (Patriarchs tradition) origin stories through
  - First Temple Judaism (unified monarchy),
  - Second Temple Judaism (under Persian/Greek rule), and
  - the emergence of distinct groups (Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes) leading to
  - modern Rabbinical Judaism and Christianity following the Temple's destruction in 70 CE

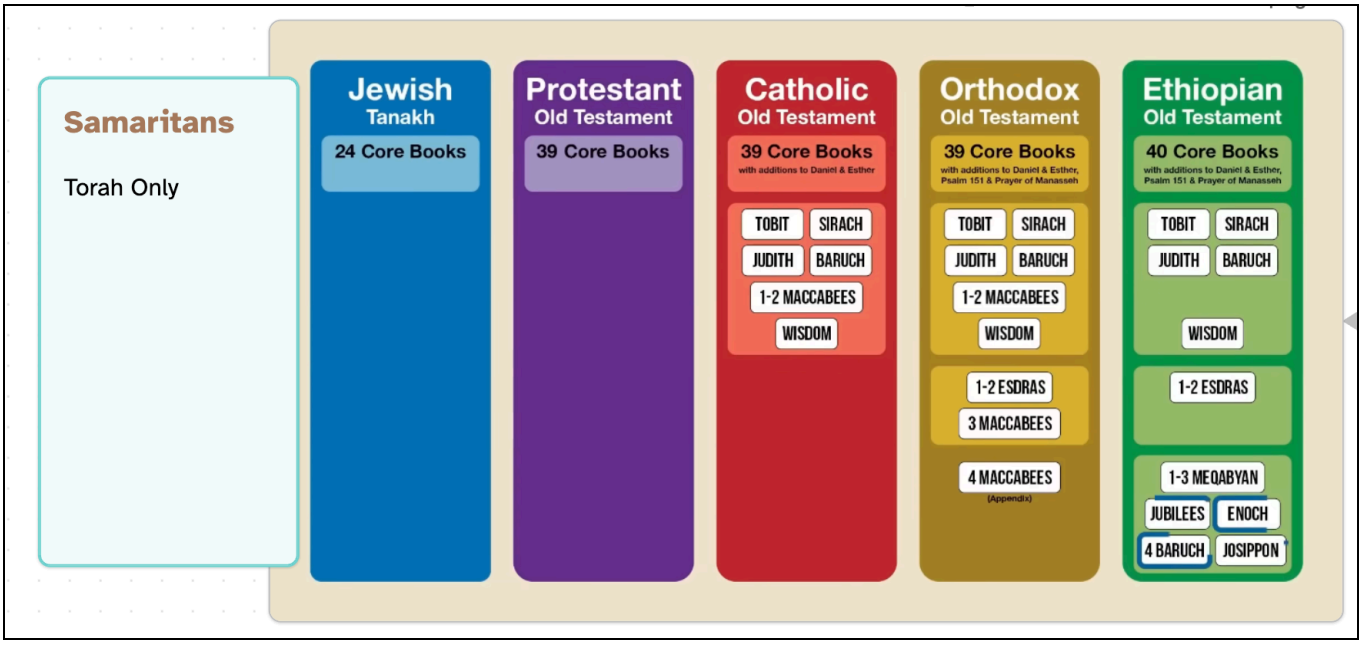
- **Source**: Matthew Baker. *Introduction to the Bible from an Academic Point of View*. 2022

2.2 The End of Second Temple Judaism


2nd Temple Judaism
Temple Destroyed 70 CE
Temple sacrifices replaced with Jesus as the ultimate, final sacrifice
Christianity
Rabbnical Judaism
Temple sacrifices replaced with Torah study and meeting in synagogues for prayer

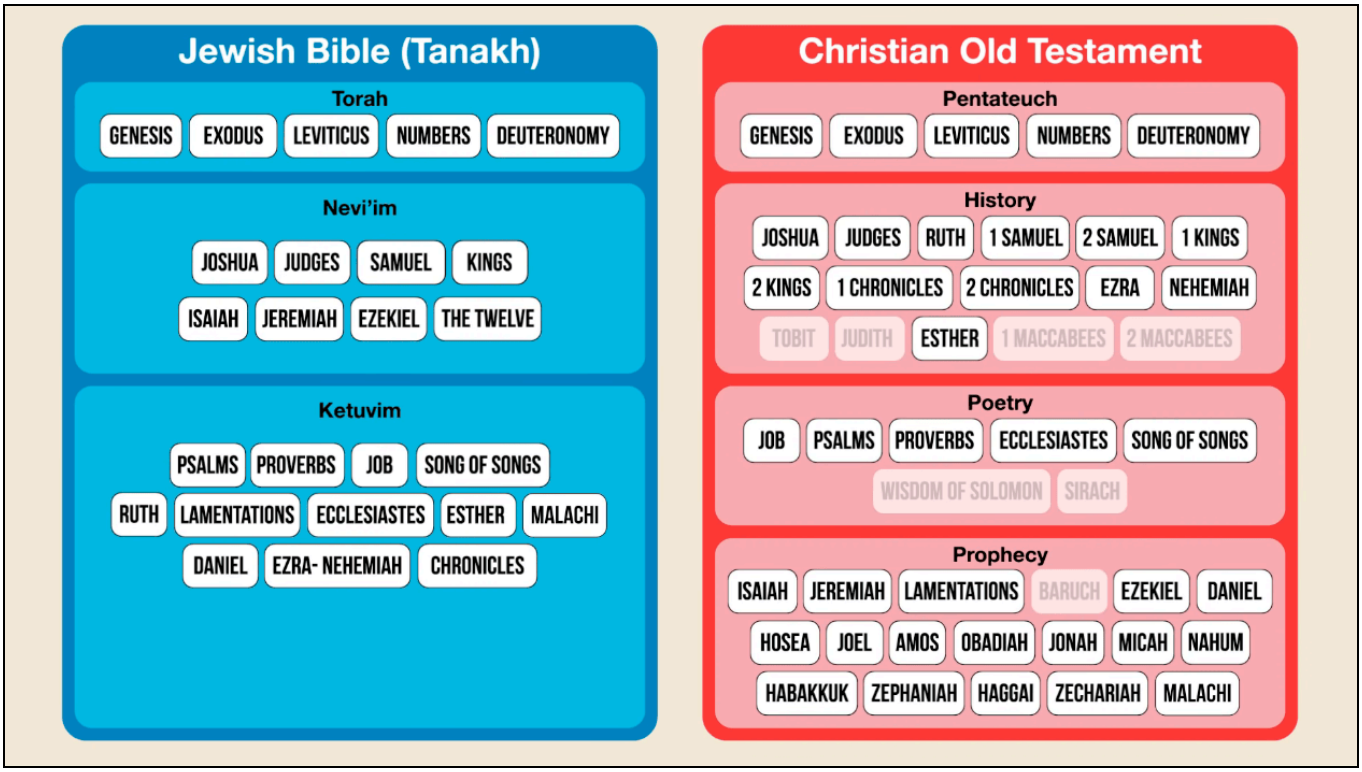
- **Source**: Matthew Baker. *Introduction to the Bible from an Academic Point of View*. 2022

2.3 Who Uses the Torah as a Sacred Text?



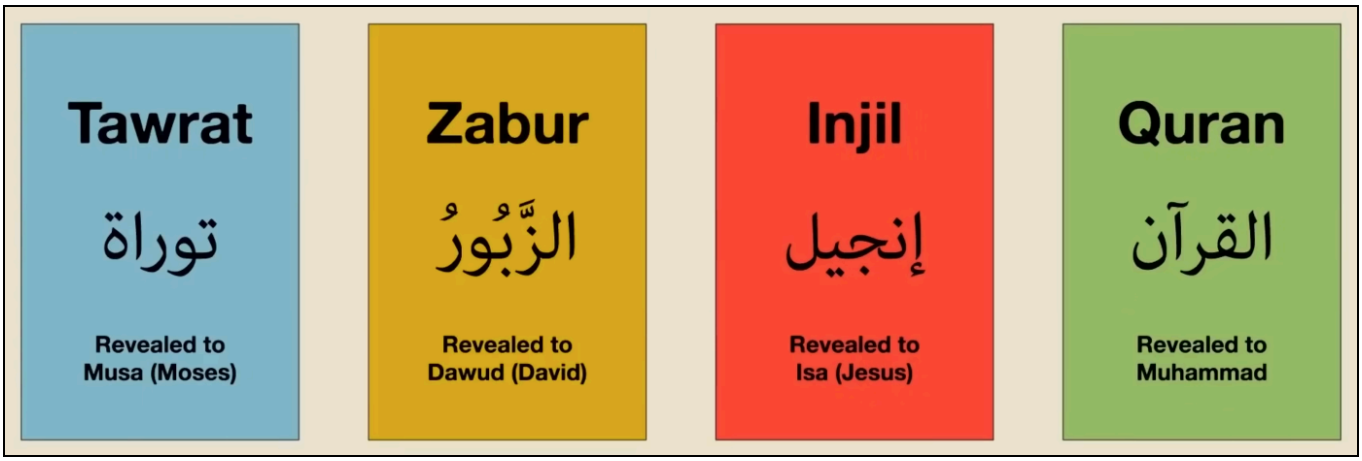
- **Caption**: Samaritans, Jews, Protestants, Catholics, Orthodox, and Ethiopian Christians all use the Torah. Samaritans the the Torah alone. Judaism uses the Tanakh, which is roughly the same set of texts as the Protestant Bible. Other Christian groups include additional works, although they are not always held at the same level of authority as the core 24.
- **Source**: Matthew Baker. *Introduction to the Bible from an Academic Point of View*. 2022 (with the addition of the Samaritans)

2.4 How Does the Jewish Bible and the Christian Old Testament Compare?



- **Caption**: Structural comparison between Jewish Tanakh (Torah, Nevi'im, Ketuvim) and Christian Old Testament (Pentateuch, History, Poetry, Prophecy) showing identical content with different organizational principles - Jewish arrangement emphasizes temporal development while Christian arrangement facilitates messianic interpretation
- **Source**: Matthew Baker's analysis of Jewish vs. Christian biblical organization

2.5 The other Religion of Abraham, Islam, on the Torah and the Gospel.



- **Caption**: Islamic perspective on revealed scriptures showing the Quranic understanding of four divine books - Tawrat (Torah) revealed to Musa (Moses), Zabur (Psalms) revealed to Dawud (David), Injil (Gospel) revealed to Isa (Jesus), and Quran revealed to Muhammad - with the Islamic belief that earlier texts became corrupted over time
- **Source**: Islamic theological framework regarding previous scriptures

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3 2 As Sacred

At its core, sacred means "set apart" and is contrasted with "profane". Profane here is more like "ordinary" instead of "gross". *So*, these are texts that are somehow set apart from all other texts. Use for preaching, teaching, and learning, one might say.

Whether we live by it or die by it; it is God's word just the same.
20:04 / 22:53
1 The Holy Ghost People, part 1
2 The Holy Ghost People, part 2
22:54

- **Caption**: Screencap from *Holy Ghost People* wherein the traveling pastor affirms the Bible as God's word, nurses a fatal rattlesnake bite while he finishes his sermon instead of seeking aid.

3.1 Two Early Canons

Marcionite Canon (1800 calBP)	The Esubian Canon (1770 calBP)

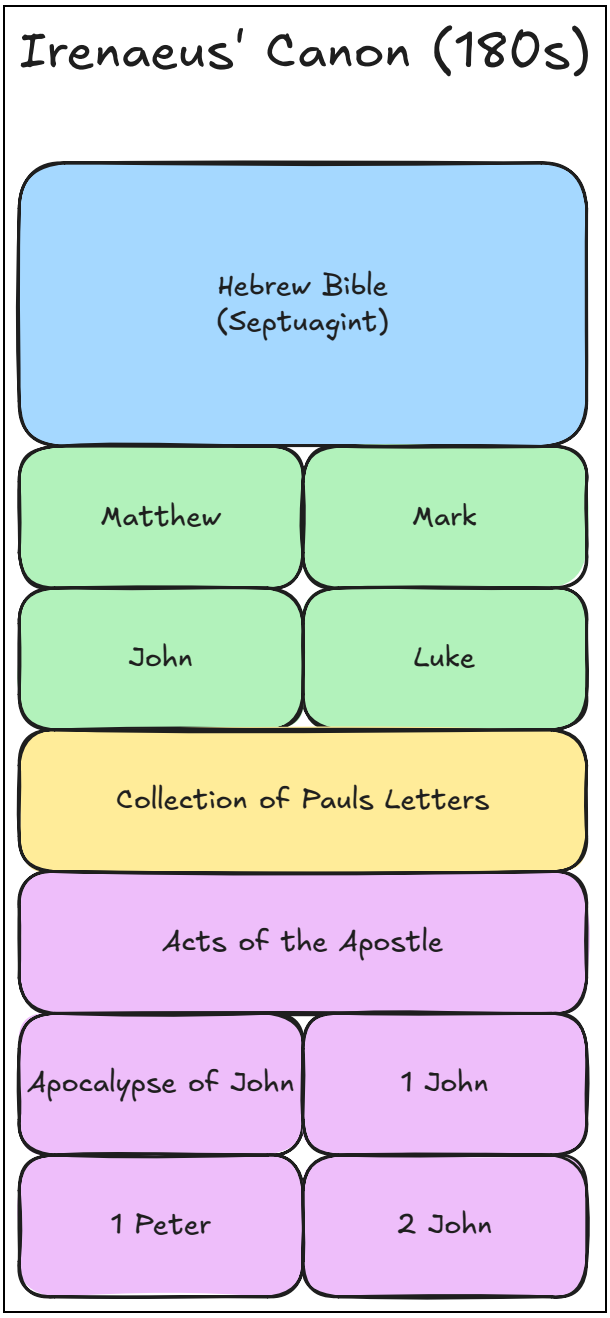
The Marcionite Canon, 1,800BP (150CE)

Gospels
Luke (OT references removed)

Occasional Letters of Paul (Apostolikon)

Galatians
Corinthians
Romans
Thessalonians
Laodiceans
Collossians
Philippians
Philemon

Reconstructed from
(a) Irenaeus, Against Heresies 1.27.2 and
(b)Tertullian, Against Marcion Books 4 & 5.



3.2 Early Christian Concerns

Development of Canon - Pre-300s

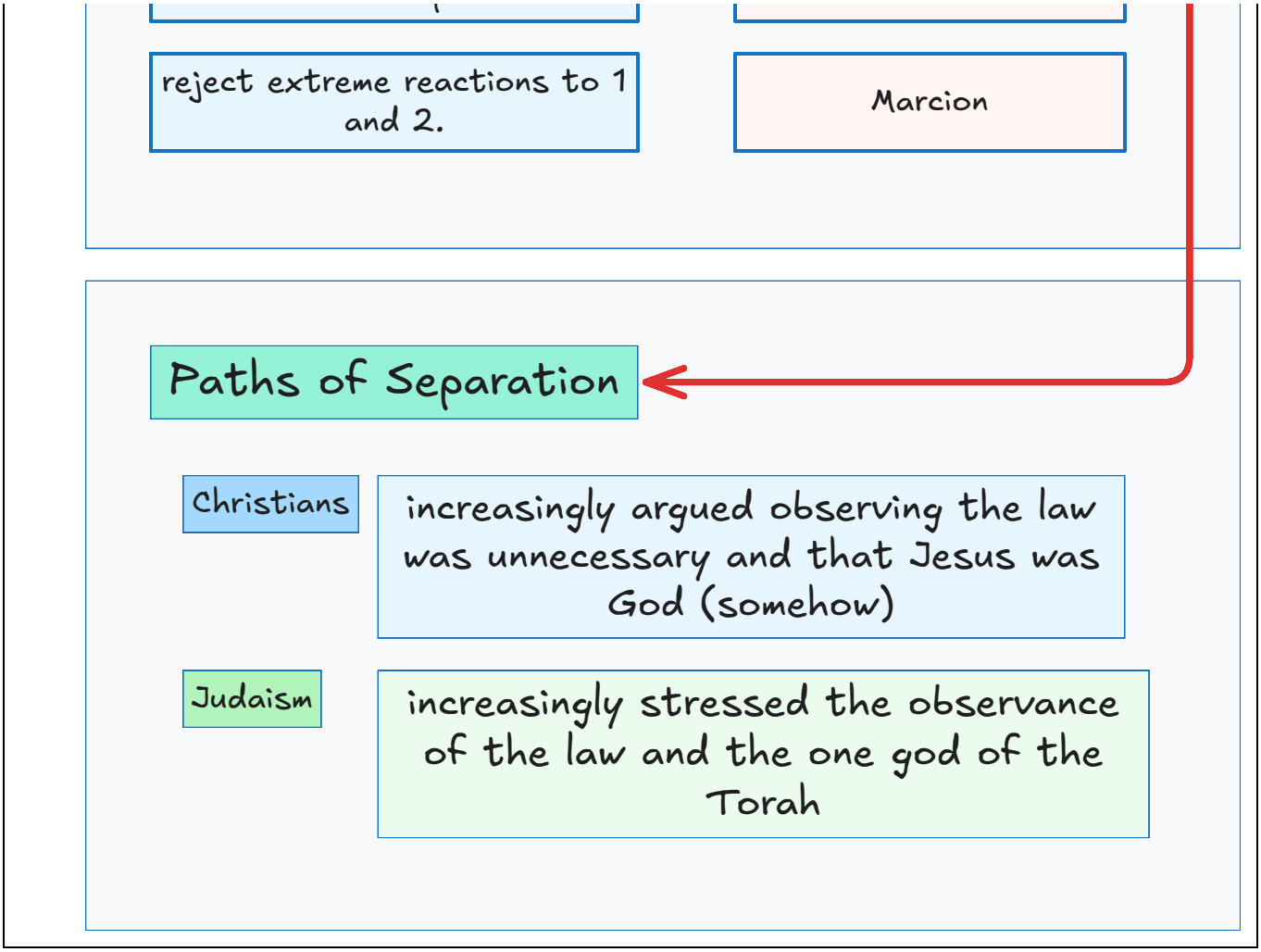
Earlier	140s	170s	180
	Marcion	Monatists	Irenaeus
No clear consensus (yet)	First canon (found to be heretical)	Considered their compositions to be inspired by the Holy Spirit (found to be heretical)	First current Bible-like canon First systematic approach to interpretation, the Rule of Faith develops.

Wayne Meeks. "The Rise of a Christian Bible" in Early Biblical Interpretation

c.180CE

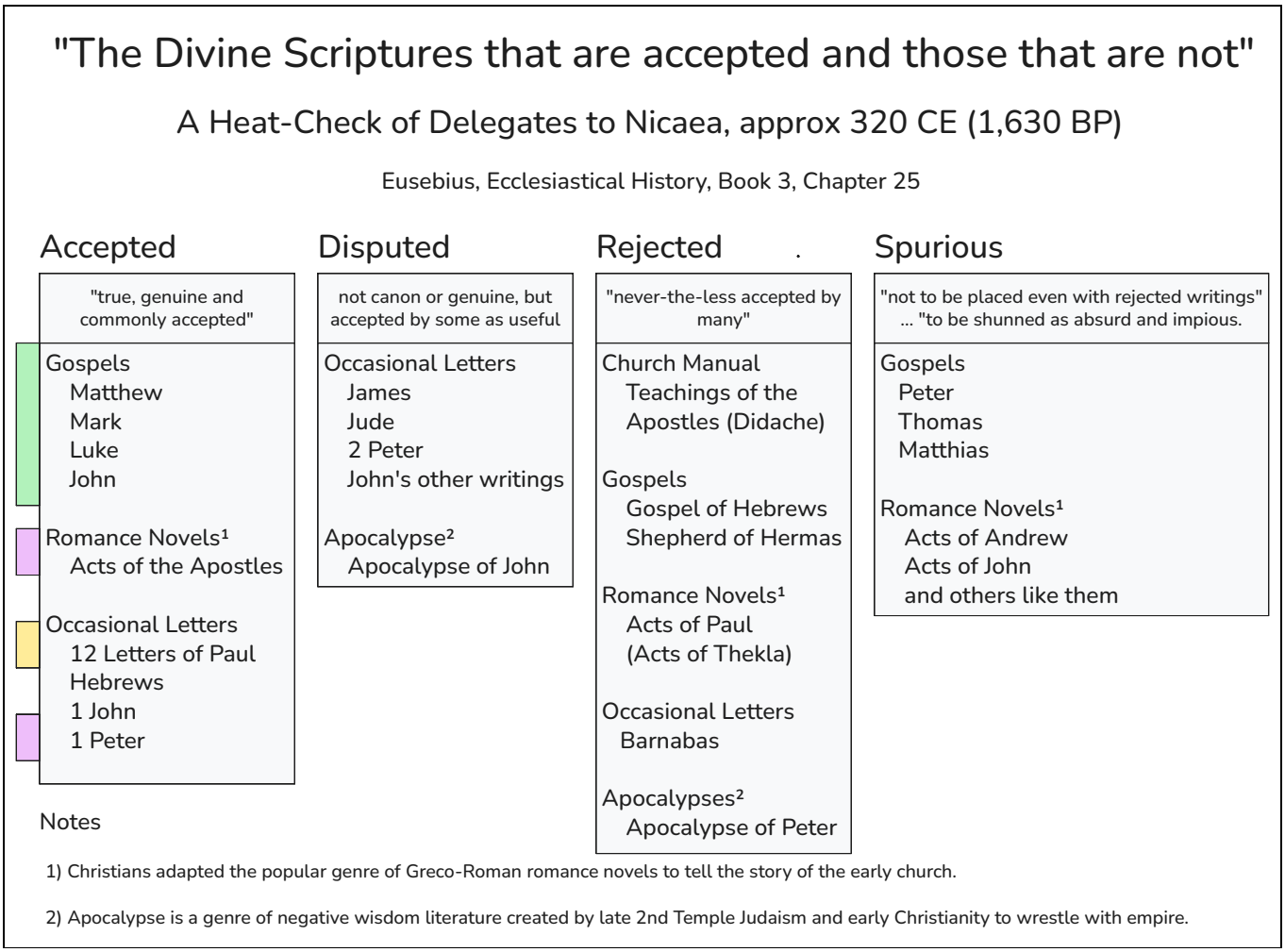
Issues	Early Answers (Irenaeus)
1. What is our set of texts?	Develop a shared list (canon)
2. How should we interpret the Hebrew scriptures?	As a witness to Christ
3. How should we interpret the whole set of scriptures?	Through the "Rule of Faith"

Early Proto-Orthodox Christians wanted to avoid	...which put them in conflict with...
rejecting the divinity of Christ	Judaism(s)
rejecting the God of the Hebrew Scriptures	"Gnostic" Christians


reject extreme reactions to 1 and 2.
Marcion
Paths of Separation
Christians
increasingly argued observing the law was unnecessary and that Jesus was God (somehow)
Judaism
increasingly stressed the observance of the law and the one god of the Torah

- **Source**: Wayne Meeks, "The Rise of a Christian Bible" in *Early Biblical Interpretation*

3.3 Making it Official - What Were the Vibes at Nicaea 1,600 Years Ago?



- **Caption**: Eusebius's canonical assessment around the time of the Council of Nicaea (c. 320 CE) categorizing early Christian literature into "accepted" (universally recognized), "disputed" (accepted by many but questioned), "rejected" (useful but not canonical), and "spurious" (absurd and impious), showing how church authorities systematically evaluated competing texts for orthodoxy
- **Source**: Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* Book 3, Chapter 25: "The Divine Scriptures that are accepted and those that are not"

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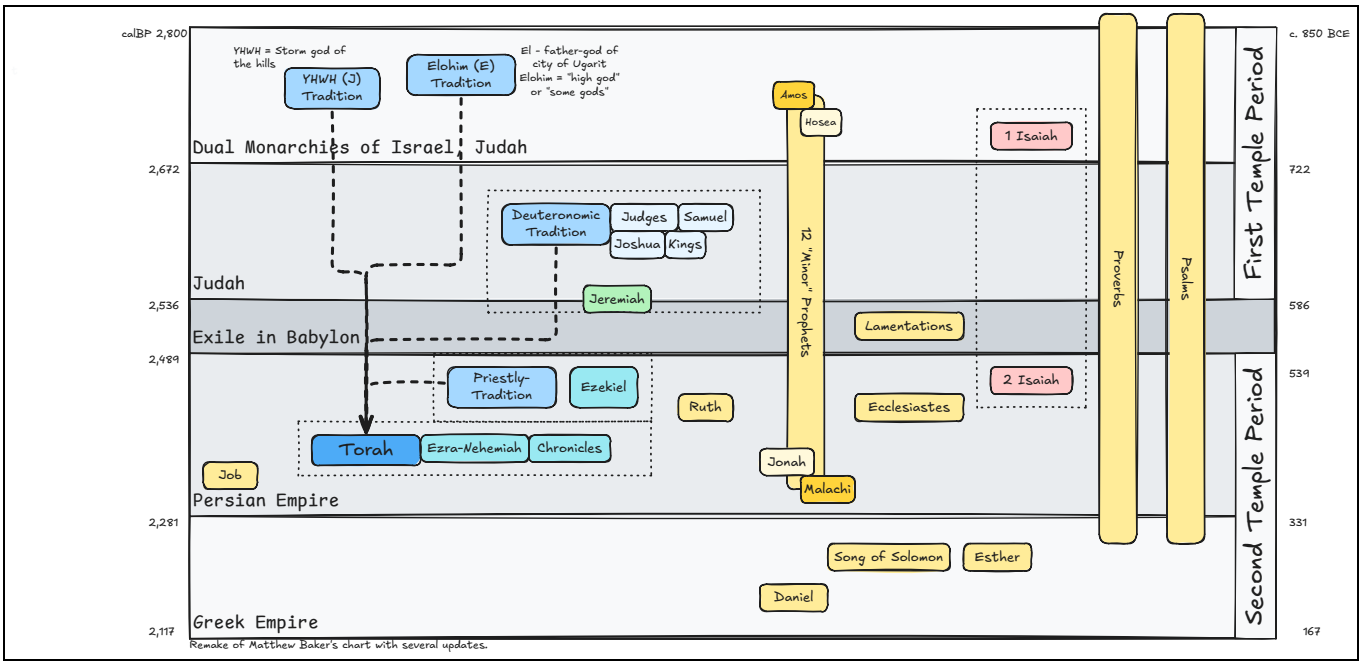
4. As a TEXT

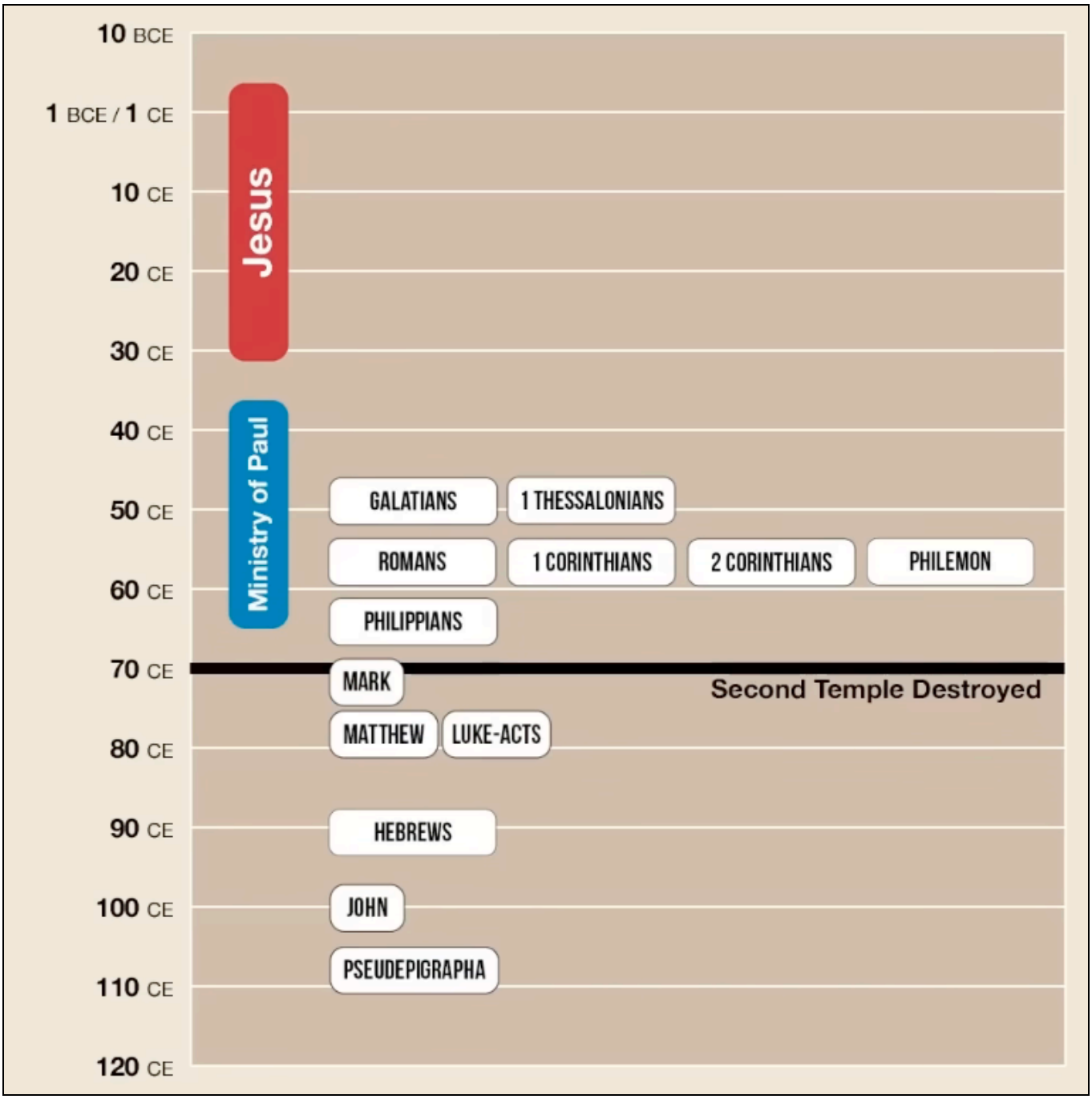
4.1 When the Bible Might Have Been Written, Some Best Guesses

4.1.1 Jewish Bible



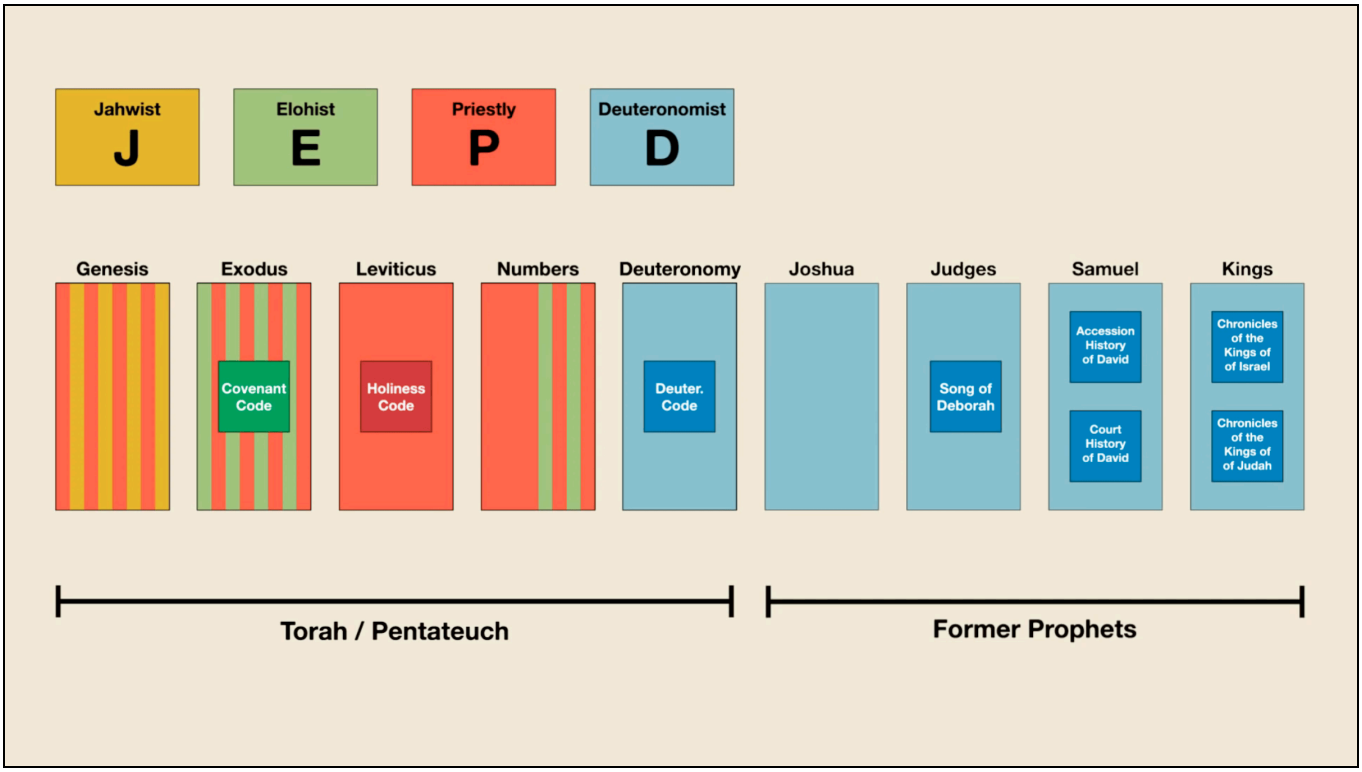
- **Caption**: Historical timeline of biblical text composition from the Dual Monarchies period (850-722 BCE) through the Second Temple period, illustrating how different biblical books emerged during specific historical contexts including the Babylonian exile, Persian restoration, and Greek dominance
- **Source**: Remake of a chart by Matthew Baker with several updates by Imler.

4.1.2 Christian New Testament



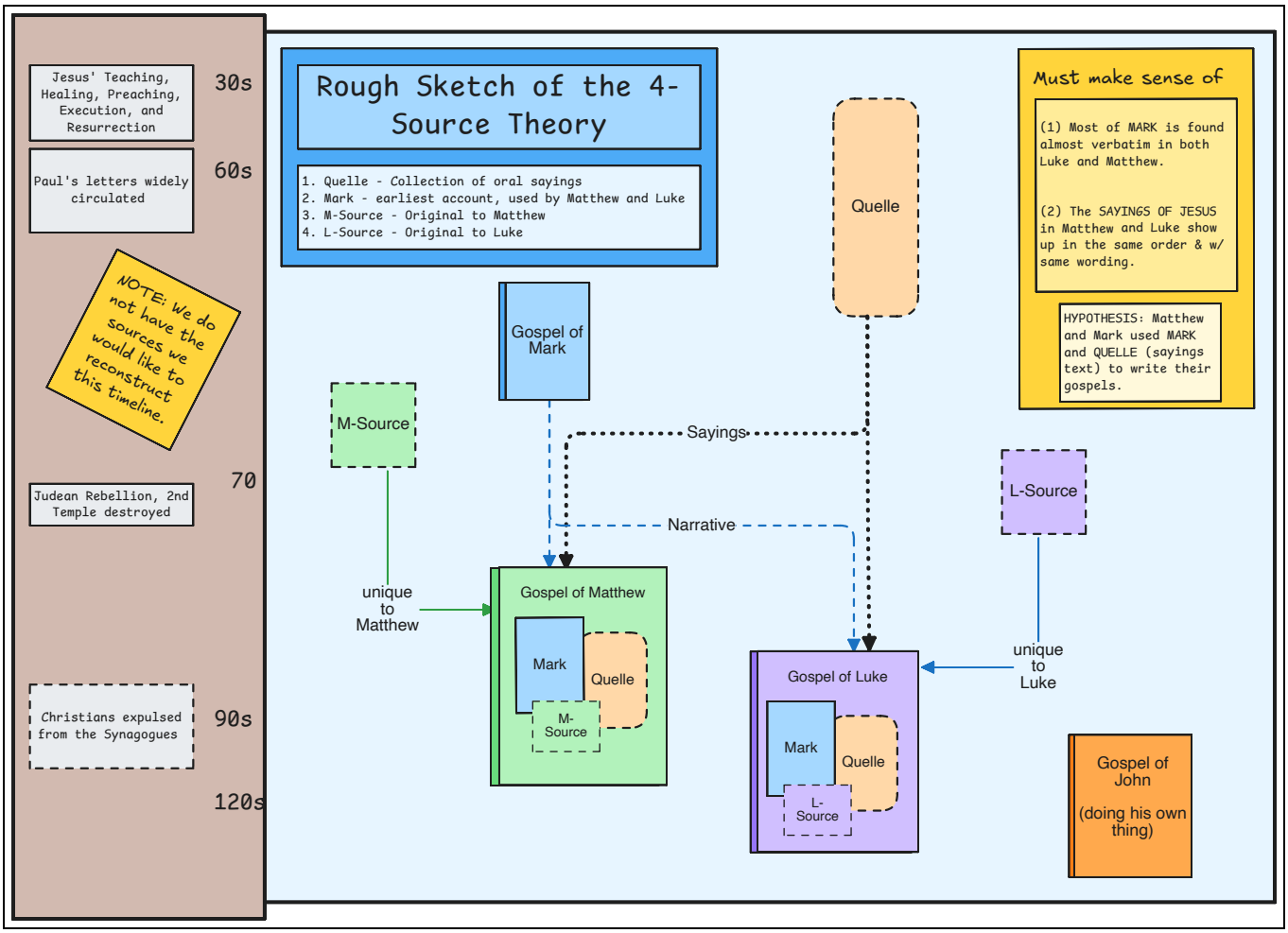
- **Source**: Matthew Baker. *Introduction to the Bible from an Academic Point of View*. 2022

4.2 What Are the Textual Layers in the Torah?



- **Caption**: Our best guess at the sources used when writing (or editing) the Torah and the Former Prophets (Deuteronomic histories).
- **Source**: Matthew Baker. *Introduction to the Bible from an Academic Point of View*. 2022

4.3 How Do the Gospels Relate?


Jesus' Teaching, Healing, Preaching, Execution, and Resurrection
30s
Paul's letters widely circulated
60s
NOTE: we do not have the sources we would like to reconstruct this timeline.
70
Judean Rebellion, 2nd Temple destroyed
Christians expulsed from the Synagogues
90s
120s
Rough Sketch of the 4-Source Theory
1. Quelle - Collection of oral sayings
2. Mark - earliest account, used by Matthew and Luke
3. M-Source - Original to Matthew
4. L-Source - Original to Luke
Quelle
Must make sense of
(1) Most of MARK is found almost verbatim in both Luke and Matthew.
(2) The SAYINGS OF JESUS in Matthew and Luke show up in the same order & w/ same wording.
HYPOTHESIS: Matthew and Mark used MARK and QUELLE (sayings text) to write their gospels.
Gospel of Mark
M-Source
Sayings
L-Source
Narrative
unique to Matthew
Gospel of Matthew
Mark
Quelle
M-Source
Gospel of Luke
Mark
Quelle
L-Source
unique to Luke
Gospel of John
(doing his own thing)

- **Caption**: How do we explain the overlap of Mark, Matthew and Luke (Synoptic Problem) while making sense of how weird John is (comparatively)?
- **Source**: Matthew Baker. *Introduction to the Bible from an Academic Point of View*. 2022